

Elihu Burritt on Intemperance.

We copy the following article from the "Bond of Brotherhood," published in London, Great Britain, and edited by the "Learned Blacksmith," ELIHU BURRITT. It will amply repay an attentive perusal.

"Here are three great generic evils—Intemperance, War, and Slavery. We will not say that all the sinning and suffering of the world are included in one or the other of these systems; but each of them, you will admit, seems to number on its muster-roll most of the vices and miseries that afflict society. Let us take, first, the habit of intemperance, for this is fraught with more sin and misery to mankind than both the other great evils put together. War is a temporary tornado, sweeping over nations at wider intervals than in darker ages. Seldom more than two or three countries are smitten by its thunderbolts of ruin at the same time. The fiery tempest of malignities rages but for a season, and within certain bounds. Thousands and tens of thousands of human lives are suddenly consumed by 'the quick cross-lightning' of hatred and revenge. The storm passes over. The fierce elements of human depravity subside from exhaustion. The sun, that looked with blood-shot eyes upon the smoking desolations of the region, looks itself again, and beams upon the land in its old way. The rains and dews fall like the Samaritan's oil into the wounds made by men in the breast of nature, and blanch out the blood-stains with weeping water-drops from heaven. Slavery, though it be 'the sum of all villainies,' is a system of atrocities inflicted upon hardly fifteen millions of the human family. Nine-tenths of the human beings involved directly in this evil, are innocent of its existence. They are bought, beat, sold and held as beasts of burden by about two millions of usurpers, who regard them as their property. Thus, if we may so say, sheer suffering predominates in the condition of slavery—suffering, not self-inflicted by the subjects of the system in gratifying their own passions and appetites, but put upon them by the cruelty and wickedness of a few of their fellow-beings possessing the power of oppression. Then it is an evil confined to limited and distant portions of the globe.

But intemperance is an evil that lies like a miasma of sin and misery upon all the populations of Christendom, more or less dank and deadly. Steadily, with but thin and infrequent gleamings or promise of pure sky and sun, it palls great communities, day and night, summer and winter, year and century. No plummet ever sounded the depth, no line ever compassed the circumference, or traversed the diameter of the sea of crime and wretchedness fed and filled by the torrent streams of this huge incubent sin—streams hissing with the gurgling agonies of despair; streams welling out of the hidden desolation of human homes in every land; streams red with the ruin of immortal souls; streams choked in the gaping gorges of iniquity with the wrecks of hopes, character, reputation, once precious as immortality to millions of warm-beating hearts; streams dashing onward to the black abyss with the maddest music of discord, in which intermingle and alternate the coarse ribaldry of midnight orgies; the sickly, whining wail of children pining for the bread that is drunk in, or hiding from the madness which it fires to frenzy in a father's eye; the yell of the maniac chased and scourged by the furies of *delirium tremens*; the blasphemies of the Sunday pot-house; and the myriad-voiced murmurings of misery, in monotonous undertone,

from fireless garrets, and hovels of poverty, and the sewers of vice, half hidden and half revealed in every town and village. The records of the prison, of the poor-house and mad-house, give but the facts that float on the surface of the sea of sin and misery, which Intemperance has filled with its fiery flood. And where is the fountain-head, where the sluice-gate of this bottomless gulf? Where is the beetling crag from which all these millions of every Christian land have plunged into the abyss at one leap? Not on the precipitate edge. Not one that ever perished on its depths ever reached it at one bound. Higher up, far higher up, among the greenest fields of life, where the stream flowed winsome and slow among the flowers, every human soul that ever sank in this sea took its first step to ruin. The custom of moderate drinking was the gateway to the gulf. No drunkard of any clime or country or age, ever reached it by any other passage. Custom, not any innate or instinctive thirst for inebriating drinks in the victims themselves at the beginning, but custom; the example of others; looking at 'the wine when it is red' in another's hand; looking at it longingly when it is quaffed by a neighbor's lips, by a near friend, by a brother, a father; custom, garlanded with the graces of hospitality, set all around with the brilliant refinement of social enjoyment; custom, consecrated by bishops and Christian ministers of all denominations, by philanthropists, statesmen, and divines; custom, hidden by the flood, 'but seen on either side,' continuous all the way to Adam in one direction, all the way to this morning's dawn, in the other; custom, set to music in palace and parlor; set to smiles in eyes flashing with the fascination of female beauty; set to joy in songs of the select circle; set to literature in the first works of human genius; set to painting by artists half worshipped as divine; set to statuary by sculptors that have chiselled out heathen gods from stone that seemed to breathe a claim for reverence; set to poetry in the greatest epics in all times and languages; the rosy, winning custom of moderate drinking is the wicket-gate through which all the myriads that have been drowned in this dead sea of destruction, first set their souls on the swift-rushing stream. Go, search all the records of human experience, and see if you can find a single case of a human being that ever took a shorter cut to this gulf of ruin than this; that ever climbed up some other way, and leaped sheer over into the abyss at a bound. Ask the most experienced in the statistics of crime and misery, if he ever heard or read of man or woman who ever engulfed a human soul in the drunkard's fate through any other postern than this custom of moderate drinking. You have never read, we have never read of such a case.

Now, then, will 'the simple circulation of the Bible' abolish this custom? Will the simple preaching of the Gospel abolish this custom? Will the simple conversion and regeneration, by the Spirit of God, of the majority of the community abolish this custom? Will every person, in becoming a sincere and devout Christian, abandon this custom, and totally cease to be a moderate drinker? In what country in the world has the Bible freer or larger circulation than in Scotland? In what country is it more widely and devoutly read, and more persons able to read it? In what country is the simple Gospel of Christ preached with more purity and power. What country is freer from heterodoxy, or can count at a sacramental table more Christian communicants, in proportion to the population, than Scotland? Not one; upon the whole face of the earth, not one. And yet, in

what country, of the same number of inhabitants, are there drunk such vast quantities of ardent spirits as in Scotland? In what land more intoxication? The state and statistics of inebriety in that highly favored country have been recently pressed upon the notice of Parliament and of the public mind. According to one respectable authority, we learn, that in forty cities and towns in Scotland, every 149 of the population support a dram-shop, while it requires 981 to keep a baker, 1,067 to support a butcher, and 2,281 to sustain a bookseller. In no country is there exacted a more strict observance of the Sabbath than in Scotland; yet, perhaps, in none, of the same size, is there drunk more ardent spirits on that sacred day; in none more intoxication and Sabbath-breaking concealed behind lowered shutters during the holy hours. And the evil seems to grow, and even government interference is invoked to check its progress. What is the cause of this? Is there no power to rise up and shut to the door through which such vast numbers are rushing into ruin, remediless and appalling? Why does not the simple circulation of the Bible achieve this? Because those who read its divine and holy precepts pretend they can find no positive prohibition there against the temperate use of ardent spirits. Why does not the simple preaching of the Gospel lift up a standard against this great iniquity that is flooding the land? Because the ablest ministers in the world can not find a direct and fully worded command against moderate drinking. Why does not every man and woman, on becoming really and truly a Christian, cease from supporting a custom fraught with such immeasurable ruin to millions? Because they see no precept enjoining upon them total abstinence from all that can intoxicate. And is it true? Is the Bible, with all its holy teachings; is the Bible, with an everlasting canon pointed against every thought and act of man's heart, and every practice that worketh ill to his neighbor; is this great Bible, with its sublime and holy moralities, powerless against this fearful aggregate of sin and misery? No! a thousand times, no! Show us, then, the words:—'Touch not, taste not, handle not anything that can intoxicate.' These are not written in this categorical form of phraseology in the Bible. We grant it. But within its blessed lids there are teachings and precepts innumerable, that convey all the meaning and obligation of this injunction. Simple teachings of the Gospel they are, and plain to the conscience of the Christian, enlightened to comprehend the compass and application of the command—'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' And these are the teachings and precepts which temperance societies are organized to educe and array against this huge, overspreading sin of intemperance, at the very head and fountain of the evil—the custom of moderate drinking.

ALL HAIL TO BOSTON!—We are informed that at a meeting of the citizens of Boston Township, Wayne Co., Indiana, held on Saturday last, the Township Trustees were instructed by a very decided vote, to levy a tax of fifty cents on the one hundred dollars of taxable property to build the necessary school houses for the accommodation of the public schools. We say all hail to Boston! She has done herself much honor, and her children will rise up and call her blessed. With 'No License' and 'Free Schools,' she is bound to flourish.—*Ind. Palladium.*

NIAGARA SUSPENSION BRIDGE.—The great combined railway, carriage and foot suspension bridge, now constructing at Niagara Falls, is being pushed forward with energy, and is expected to be ready for the trains by the first of May next year. It will be one of the most remarkable architectural works in the world.

From the Prairie City. Liquor Law in Iowa.

Bloomington, Iowa April 22, 1853.

DEAR SIR:—That you may know how the temperance cause is prospering here in Iowa, I will give you a sketch of a scrape that happened a few days ago, in a flourishing little place called Brighton in Washington county.

It so happened that it was possessed of a little *Rum doggery*, which had—as is usual—incurred the displeasure of the more civilized inhabitants particularly the Ladies who by the way, determined to put a stop to the traffic—especially in their once peaceful burgh.

Assembling one evening for that purpose, they went *en masse* to the Liquor shop, and offered to buy his Liquors provided he would sell no more in that place; this the noble vender obstinately refused to do, whereupon the ladies—numbering between 30 and 40—expressed their determination to destroy it, without remunerating the lordly owner; but he not liking the idea of seeing his rum spilled, presented a gun threatening to shoot the first woman that touched his whisky barrels or wine bottles. Thinking that perhaps he had no more courage than to shoot a female, the ladies retired. But in a few days they returned—being reintorched, and actually forced him to allow them to destroy his liquors by politely emptying them on the ground. This was too much; the enraged man immediately entered suit against the ladies for rioting. The day of the trial came round. The excitement was great, and public opinion, was of course on the side of the fair sex. Hundreds congregated at the magistrate's office, as eager to hear the indictment as the decision of the Justice. The ladies had procured a councillor, and were as fully determined to have some sport, as an acquittal, and for that purpose they had brought any quantity of Pies, Cakes, &c. The hour of trial came on, the indictment was read and received with cheers by the ladies; whereupon the worthy councillor in behalf of the defendants, picked a flaw in the indictment, and the suit was dismissed. "But the end was not yet;" no sooner had the magistrate dismissed the suit than the accused arose as with one accord, and waving their handkerchiefs in attitudes of triumph, made the place ring, with cheers for the magistrate, their attorney, and the temperance cause.

Their table was then spread—or rather their edibles—and a young lady noted for her boldness, in what she deemed to be right, got upon a wagon and loudly called upon those who were friendly to the cause of temperance,—the prosperity of their country—peace abroad—plenty and unity at home—to partake of the repast that she and her associates had prepared for them.

There were but few who did not partake, viz: the grog-seller and some of his customers, who stood around, emphatically seemed like bound boys at country frolic.

Those who did partake eat heartily concluding that WOMEN were the best Anti-Liquor Law that had been in force. A. B. C.

CHINA.—A territory of more than five millions of square miles, four thousand walled cities, a population of three hundred and fifty millions, an army of nearly two millions of soldiers, a fleet of a thousand sail, and an annual revenue of two millions of dollars, are some of the evidences of its immeasurable wealth. Among the productions of its soil, every acre of which is in the highest state of cultivation, are seen nearly all the richest offerings of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms.

AIR-LINE RAILWAY FROM DETROIT TO ST. LOUIS.—We alluded to this proposed road, in our 11th issue. We now give the route and distances as proposed, viz: